

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

Responsive to Preliminary Amendment filed May 16, 2008. Claims 1-2, 4-7, 9-12, and 14-15 have been canceled. Claims 3, 8, and 13 have been amended. **Claims 3, 8, and 13 are now allowed.**

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Robert Voigt, Jr. on May 23, 2008.

The application has been amended as follows:

- In the specification, please amend the second paragraph of page 13 (lines 10-25) as follows:

[Implementations of the invention include implementations as a computer system programmed to execute the method or methods described, herein, and as a computer program product. According to the computer system implementation, sets of instructions for executing the method or methods may be resident in the random access memory 314 of one or more computer systems configured generally as described above. Until required by the computer system, the set of instructions may be stored as a computer program product in another computer memory, for example, in disk drive 320 (which may include a removable memory such as an optical disk or

floppy disk for eventual use in the disk drive 320). ~~Further, the computer program product can also be stored at another computer and transmitted when desired to the user's work station by a network or by an external network such as the Internet. One skilled in the art would appreciate that the physical storage of the sets of instructions physically changes the medium upon which it is stored so that the medium carries computer readable information. The change may be electrical, magnetic, chemical, biological, or some other physical change.~~ While it is convenient to describe the invention in terms of instructions, symbols, characters, or the like, the reader should remember that all of these and similar terms should be associated with the appropriate physical elements.]

- In the claims, please amend as follows:

Claim 3 (**Currently Amended**) A computer program product for implementing an electronic commerce system supporting on-line stores accessible by a set of buyers, each buyer having a buyer representation in the electronic commerce system, each buyer representation being associated with one of a set of one or more organizations, the computer program product comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied in said medium, and comprising:

computer readable program code means for defining and maintaining a set of customer trading agreement data items, each comprising terms and conditions associated with one of the set of buyer representations and one or more of the on-line stores;

computer readable program code means for defining and maintaining a set of base trading agreement data items comprising terms and conditions, each of the base trading agreement data items being available for reference by one or more of the customer trading agreement data items or one or more of others of the set of base trading agreement data items;

computer readable program code means for defining and maintaining a set of store settings trading agreement data items, each store settings trading agreement data item being associated with one of the on-line stores;

computer readable program code means for defining and maintaining a set of organization-specific trading agreement data items, each organization-specific trading agreement data item being associated with one of the set of organizations; and

computer readable program code means for implementing an application interface for returning a set of governing terms and conditions for a buyer-store electronic commerce session, based on the referenced customer, base, store settings and organization-specific trading agreement data items;

in which the application interface for returning a set of governing terms and conditions determines the set of governing conditions for the buyer-store electronic commerce session by taking the union set of the terms and conditions specified in the following trading agreements, where such agreements are defined to comprise:

- a. the customer trading agreement data item for the buyer-store electronic commerce session,

- b. any the base trading agreement data items referenced by the customer trading agreement data item and by other referenced base trading agreements,
- c. any the store settings trading agreement data items for the store of the buyer-store electronic commerce session, and
- d. any the organization-specific trading agreement data items for the ancestor organizations to the buyer representation in the buyer-store electronic commerce session; in which the application interface for returning a set of governing terms and conditions determines the set of governing terms and conditions for the buyer-store electronic commerce session by applying a set of conflict rules to the set of the terms and conditions in the union set of the said trading agreements.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended) An electronic commerce system supporting on-line stores accessible by a set of buyers, each buyer having a buyer representation in the electronic commerce system, each buyer representation being associated with one of a set of one or more organizations, the system comprising:

means for defining and maintaining a set of customer trading agreement data items, each comprising terms and conditions associated with one of the set of buyer representations and one or more of the on-line stores;

means for defining and maintaining a set of base trading agreement data items comprising terms and conditions, each of the base trading agreement data items being available for reference by one or more of the customer trading agreement data items or one or more of others of the set of base trading agreement data items;

means for defining and maintaining a set of store settings trading agreement data items, each store settings trading agreement data item being associated with one of the on-line stores; means for defining and maintaining a set of organization-specific trading agreement data items, each organization-specific trading agreement data item being associated with one of the set of organizations; and

an application interface for returning a set of governing terms and conditions for a buyer-store electronic commerce session, based on the referenced customer, base, store settings and organization-specific trading agreement data items;

in which the application interface for returning a set of governing terms and conditions determines the set of governing conditions for the buyer-store electronic commerce session by taking the union set of the terms and conditions specified in the following trading agreements where such agreements are defined to comprise:

the customer trading agreement data item for the buyer-store electronic commerce session;

any the base trading agreement data items referenced by the customer trading agreement data item and by other referenced base trading agreements;

any the store settings trading agreement data items for the store of the buyer-store electronic commerce session; and

any the organization-specific trading agreement data items for the ancestor organizations to the buyer representation in the buyer-store electronic commerce session; in which the application interface for returning a set of governing terms and conditions determines the set of governing terms and conditions for the buyer-store electronic commerce session by

applying a set of conflict rules to the set of the terms and conditions in the union set of the said trading agreements.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method for defining governing terms and conditions for a transaction in an electronic commerce system, the system supporting on-line stores accessible by a set of buyers, each buyer having a buyer representation in the electronic commerce system, each buyer representation being associated with one of a set of one or more organizations, the method comprising the steps of:

defining and maintaining a set of customer trading agreement data items, each comprising terms and conditions associated with one of the set of buyer representations and one or more of the on-line stores;

defining and maintaining a set of base trading agreement data items comprising terms and conditions, each of the base trading agreement data items being available for reference by one or more of the customer trading agreement data items or one or more of others of the set of base trading agreement data items;

defining and maintaining a set of store settings trading agreement data items, each store settings trading agreement data item being associated with one of the on-line stores;

defining and maintaining a set of organization-specific trading agreement data items each organization-specific trading agreement data item being associated with one of the set of organizations; and

determining the governing terms and conditions for the buyer-store electronic commerce session for the said transaction, based on any referenced customer, base, store settings and organization-specific trading agreement data items;

in which the step of determining the governing terms and conditions comprises the step of taking the union set of the terms and conditions specified in the trading agreements defined to comprise:

the customer trading agreement data item for the buyer-store electronic commerce session;

any the base trading agreement data items referenced by the customer trading agreement data item and by other referenced base trading agreements;

any the store settings trading agreement data items for the store of the buyer-store electronic commerce session; and

any the organization-specific trading agreement data items for the ancestor organizations to the buyer representation in the buyer-store electronic commerce session;

in which the step of returning a set of governing terms and conditions further comprises the step of applying a set of conflict rules to the set of the terms and conditions in the union set of the said trading agreements.

Reasons for Allowance

- The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

None of the prior art of record, neither singularly nor in combination teach a computer-implemented method for defining governing terms and conditions for a transaction in an electronic commerce system, the system supporting on-line stores accessible by a set of buyers, each buyer having a buyer representation in the electronic commerce system, each buyer representation being associated with one of a set of one or more organizations, the method comprising the steps of: defining and maintaining a set of customer trading agreement data items, each comprising terms and conditions associated with one of the set of buyer representations and one or more of the on-line stores; defining and maintaining a set of base trading agreement data items comprising terms and

conditions, each of the base trading agreement data items being available for reference by one or more of the customer trading agreement data items or one or more of others of the set of base trading agreement data items; defining and maintaining a set of store settings trading agreement data items, each store settings trading agreement data item being associated with one of the on-line stores; defining and maintaining a set of organization-specific trading agreement data items each organization-specific trading agreement data item being associated with one of the set of organizations; and determining the governing terms and conditions for the buyer-store electronic commerce session for the said transaction, based on any referenced customer, base, store settings and organization-specific trading agreement data items; in which the step of determining the governing terms and conditions comprises the step of taking the union set of the terms and conditions specified in the trading agreements defined to comprise: the customer trading agreement data item for the buyer-store electronic commerce session; the base trading agreement data items referenced by the customer trading agreement data item and by other referenced base trading agreements; the store settings trading agreement data items for the store of the buyer-store electronic commerce session; and the organization-specific trading agreement data items for the ancestor organizations to the buyer representation in the buyer-store electronic commerce session; in which the step of returning a set of governing terms and conditions further comprises the step of applying a set of conflict rules to the set of the terms and conditions in the union set of the said trading agreements, as taught by **claim 13**.

- **Claims 3 and 8** contain similar limitations as claim 13, therefore are allowed for similar reasons.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ramsey Refai whose telephone number is (571)272-3975. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30 - 5:00 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ryan Zeender can be reached on (571) 272-6790. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Ramsey Refai
May 23, 2008
/R. R. /
Examiner, Art Unit 3627

/F. Ryan Zeender/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3627